

REMARKS

Claims 1-17, 19-37, 41-43, 45-49, 53-55, and 57-59 are currently pending in the subject application and are presently under consideration. Claims 1, 17, 19, 32, 41, 57, 58, and 59 have been amended herein and claim 18 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. A listing of all claims is found at pages 2-12 of this Response. Favorable consideration of the subject patent application is respectfully requested in view of the amendments herein.

In prior prosecution, claims 1-7, 10-11, 15, 31-34, 36-37, 41-43, 45-47, 49, 53-55, and 57-59 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Hays *et al.* (US 6,260,004) in view of Grimm *et al.* (US 6,369,472); claims 8-9, 12-14, and 16-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Hays *et al.* (US 6,260,004) and Grimm *et al.* (US 6,369,472) in view of Ogi *et al.* (US 5,419,197); claims 20-30 and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being obvious over Hays *et al.* (US 6,260,004) and Grimm *et al.* (US 6,369,472) in view of Petsche *et al.* (US 5,640,103); and claim 48 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Hays *et al.* (US 6,260,004) and Grimm *et al.* (US 6,369,472) in view of Gotou *et al.* (US 4,933,834). Pursuant to the decision by the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences, independent claims 1, 32, 41, 57, 58, and 59 have been amended herein and are believed to obviate these rejections. Accordingly, these independent claims, as well as claims that depend there from, are believed to be allowable. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

The present application is believed to be in condition for allowance in view of the above comments and amendments. A prompt action to such end is earnestly solicited.

In the event any fees are due in connection with this document, the Commissioner is authorized to charge those fees to Deposit Account No. 50-1063 [ALBRP112USA].

Should the Examiner believe a telephone interview would be helpful to expedite favorable prosecution, the Examiner is invited to contact applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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